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## Letter dated 17 July 2002 from the Permanent Representative of Canada to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the Hamilton Statement on Managing Shared Waters, which was adopted by participants from 30 countries at a conference on the theme "Managing shared waters, held in Hamilton, Canada, from 23 to 28 June 2002 (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

(*Signed*) Paul **Heinbecker**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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**Annex to the letter dated 17 July 2002 from the Permanent Representative of Canada to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General**

# MANAGING SHARED WATERS

***Towards Sustainable Transboundary Coastal Ecosystems***

***JUNE 23 - 28, 2002***

***HAMILTON, ONTARIO, CANADA***

## Hamilton Statement on Managing Shared Waters

***June 28, 2002***

Practitioners and stakeholders from freshwater and marine communities – 400 participants from 30 countries - joined together at the "Managing Shared Waters" (MSW) Conference, in Hamilton Canada, June 23-28, 2002, to recommend actions for effective management of transboundary coastal ecosystems and shared waters.

Today, more than half of the world's people live within 150 kilometers of a coast. This growing population is putting increasing residential, industrial, and recreational demands on these valuable and vulnerable ecosystems. The world's coasts, both marine and freshwater, are in crisis.

The participants recognized the limitations of our present human and institutional capacity to fully implement integrated coastal management. The lack of a comprehensive approach to capacity development has hampered efforts to enhance water management.

They agreed that there is an urgent need to develop capacity in four areas, referred to as the four "pillars" of capacity: education, training and public awareness raising; institutional and participatory frameworks; measuring and understanding coastal ecosystems; and infrastructure, products and services. In addition, they recognized that the future potential for the sustainability of freshwater and marine coastal ecosystems will be compromised unless all sectors of society increase their efforts to work together.

The participants strongly affirm commitment to the Rio Principles, to the full implementation of Agenda 21 and to the UN Millennium Goals.

Based on their deliberations, the participants recommended the following priorities for action to the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg in August 2002 and to the World Water Forum in Kyoto in March 2003.

**Priorities for Action:**

1. Increased and long-term investment in capacity development must be a greater priority for integrated coastal management, with particular

**emphasis on shared coastal ecosystems. This is a critical and urgent imperative for action.**

2. **Effective *integrated* coastal ecosystem management must be accompanied by *integrated* capacity development. This requires better overall coordination of the four "pillars" of the capacity development process and better integration of marine, coastal and freshwater ecosystem management.**

3. Capacity development must be focused primarily at the community level. This is the most direct path forward.

**Specific Recommendations:**

**Education, Training and Awareness Raising:** Greater emphasis must be placed on awareness raising, particularly at the community level. However, education and training programs must also be sustained and enhanced.

**Institutional and Participatory Frameworks**: Greater emphasis must be placed on local level participation in decision-making, including the engagement of women. Integrated coastal management should be ecosystem-based and supported by effective mechanisms for inter-jurisdictional cooperation.

**Measuring and Understanding Coastal Ecosystems:** Alternatives to conventional monitoring are needed including greater community participation. The research community needs to support new approaches with more emphasis on applied studies at the local level.

**Infrastructure, Products and Services**: Drinking water supply and sanitation remain grossly inadequate in coastal regions. Community level solutions, innovative partnerships and the application of existing and promising new technologies should be emphasized.

**Challenges to Coastal Communities:**

The participants urged the North American Great Lakes Community to continue to innovate on institutional arrangements and other mechanisms, such as Round Tables, and provide leadership in capacity building and sharing best practices.

The participants urged the international coastal ecosystem community to maintain the momentum created by this conference through initiatives that bring together stakeholders to share experiences in capacity building for managing shared waters.

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